

631 merchants played an important part in the diffusion of sedentary cultural traits, and it is
 643 possible also that the growth of the mercantile interests of the aristocracy tended to increase disparities of wealth between Kazak classes.²⁰

[642] It is difficult to get precise information on how the government of the khan functioned and what were the channels of administration. Although he was surrounded by a number of advisers, usually his relatives, there is little evidence of departmentalization or division of responsibility. Further there was no system of administrative units graded into a series of subdivisions. The relation between each local group and the khan was direct.²¹

651 The most important function of the khan's court, certainly from the point of view of the khan, was the collection of tribute, or taxes (albm). This took the form, not of regularized imposts, but of occasional demands. Levshin writes²² that Kazak chiefs had the right to exact tribute from their subjects in the form of cattle and other goods but such tribute was not paid according to any fixed rule and, by my information, perhaps only when the payer happened to feel the need of standing in the good graces of the khan for the sake of protection. But Levshin adds that by divers unregulated means the khans exacted from their subjects a substantial revenue.

The local leaders, however, were generally not averse to assisting in the collection of such taxes because the burden did not fall on them directly. They simply passed on the tax to their own subjects, taking advantage of the opportunity to add on a comfortable percentage which they retained for themselves. Kargabaiev could remember such taxes being discussed by his father, but his information was scanty and generalized. He was sure, however, that everyone, rich and poor alike, was expected to contribute one out of every ten sheep annually for the support of the mullah and also to donate to him all their old clothes. The last detail adds a touch of verisimilitude to an otherwise extremely bald narrative. It was also a frequent proceeding for the bij and aqsaqal to levy local taxes on their own authority.

[701] The demands for taxes arrived in the form of a decree (qarlbq) from the court of the khan. Similar decrees might be issued calling upon local officials to supply the khan with a certain number of fighting men for a particular occasion. Apart from the bodyguards and personal attendants of the khan there was no standing army. After the fighting everyone went home.

643 From what has been said above of the composition of the khanates it is obvious that there was no generally recognized principle of succession to the khan's power.²³ At his

²⁰ See also Bartold, *Turkistan*, 394, who points out that the interests of the Mongol khans coincided with those of the Moslem capitalists.

²¹ Asfendiarov, personal communication.

²² *Description des hordes*, 393-94.

²³ See also Bartold, *Turkistan*, 60, who in a strong criticism of Howarth writes: "... the author should have known something of nomadic life and its political organization, in which there can be no question of a regular order of succession to the throne or of elections according to legal forms, yet he seriously examines the

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death, according to my informants, a brother or a son might succeed or the heritage be divided among several sons. This made for smaller and smaller subdivisions until they were presently welded again into one when a particular ruler gained supremacy over the others. The death of a khan was normally followed by a civil war, with the local leaders taking sides with one or the other claimant or cautiously remaining neutral until it became clear which was likely to emerge victorious. (WA)

There are references²⁴ to meetings or councils to settle questions of general policy for the khans. Such gatherings, however, cannot be said to have been of a democratic nature; Levshin²⁵ describes them as composed of the chiefs, the great warriors, the rich and the elders, "avec des troupes de curieux." The right to participate in such councils was not clearly defined; those who considered themselves entitled to do so took part and their words bore weight according to their personal prestige. It does not appear that any decisions which might be arrived at were binding upon anyone. Grodtkov²⁶ was told that the meetings "did not change their customs."

The loose nature of the bond between the khan and the local groups has been indicated above. It is very difficult to speak of centralized, or at least responsible, government during the greater part of Kazak history. The point which I wish to emphasize again, however, is the lack of correlation between the genealogical "tribal" groupings and the political unions. There is little evidence of any graded series of political subdivisions or hierarchy of officials. Reverting again to the diagram on page 30, the bij and aqaqal of the Davlet group, for example, were not in any way subordinate to the bij and aqaqal of the Baqqa group. The two groups were quite independent, united only in their common if tenuous allegiance to their particular khan. In any given case moreover such similarly related groups might be subject to two different khans.²⁷

In practice, however, there were instances of something approaching a dependence of one local group upon another, when a new uru group was in the process of development. There were for example a few families from Davlet consisting of about thirty tents who formed a semi-detached unit by themselves. They had their own headmen, also called aqaqal, who regulated the affairs of his few families but was generally influenced and controlled by the bij and aqaqal of Davlet. Such a situation could doubtless be duplicated frequently. All groups were of course not of the same size and the smaller and weaker sought protection from the stronger. As the smaller groups increased in size they became independent equals of the established units.

question which of the Chinghids in one case or another had the best right to the throne, and whether the election of this or that khan was legally valid."

²⁴ Grodtkov, *Kirgiz i Kazakhgizy*, 37; Levshin, *Description des hordes*, 397; Pallu, *Voyage*, 2: 621-22.

²⁵ *Description des hordes*, 397.

²⁶ *Kirgiz i Kazakhgizy*, 37.

²⁷ Here I am giving my own inferences from the general character of the information. The informants agreed that the above statement was true in principle but could furnish no concrete illustration. Kargabiev was very uncertain about the larger political affiliations of his own group.

631 The relations between such independent local groups¹ were not markedly affected either
 642 by genealogical groupings or by political affiliations. Thus war might be carried on between
 721 two uru closely connected by descent from a common parent group, or between parent
 group and offshoot, or between two unrelated groups both owing allegiance to the same
 khan.

721 Such local wars, "barantas" (barhanta), were usually considered as reprisals for damage
 628 done by one group to another. They might continue for generations and take on the nature
 of hereditary feuds.²⁸ It is difficult at this time to obtain precise data on their cause and
 origin. According to my informants they usually resulted from thefts of cattle, raids on
 hay fields, and personal injury or murder committed by members of one group against those
 of another. Such episodes in inter-group relations would normally first be referred to a meet-
 [627] ing of the bij and aqsaaq of both groups. The meeting was called bitim, literally "peace" or
 "truce." Here an effort was made to fix responsibility and the amount of damages to be
 paid in compensation for the injury done. If the immediate parties concerned were not par-
 ticularly important individuals a decision agreeable to the leaders of both groups would
 probably be reached amicably and the offending party ordered to pay the proper fine. If,
 however, the principals to the dispute were both influential men in their respective groups
 the meeting would probably end in a disagreement because a judge would rarely agree to a
 decision counter to the interests of a powerful member of his own group, who would
 probably be his close relative. In case of such a deadlock the man who considered himself
 the injured party might gather his own followers, and if sufficiently influential his whole
 uru, and proceed to make a small scale war upon his adversary. Such wars might indeed
 be major military operations if the importance of the individuals concerned were suffi-
 ciently great.

It therefore becomes difficult to distinguish between barantas as cases of personal re-
 venge and as wars involving whole uru which were obliged to support the interests of their
 leaders. Levshin, however,²⁹ describes an instance of a baranta of a private nature entered
 upon by an individual to collect damages to which he was entitled by judgment of the court
 but which had not been paid. In this case, according to Levshin, the injured party was
 authorized by the chief of his aul to exercise reprisals, but on his return was obliged to
 swear that the amount of damage which he had done or booty which he had collected did
 not exceed the amount of the original claim. Levshin³⁰ states elsewhere that whereas for-
 merly a baranta was only entered upon after deliberation by the chiefs in cases of culpa-
 ble refusal to pay judgments, in his time any malcontent who could gather around him a
 band of followers might attack the herds and dwellings of his enemy.

628 The essential problem connected with the subject of baranta is the extent of solidarity
 565 of the uru and its collective responsibility for injuries done to its blood members. Here it is

²⁸ See Levshin, *Déscription des hordes*, 302, 349-51, 400, note 1; Dingelstedt, *Le Droit coutumier*, 454.

²⁹ *Déscription des hordes*, 400.

³⁰ *Idem*, 349.

¹[see cat. 116, p 65 -- Analyst]

[283 cont.]

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It was in 1790 that he began to give the strongest proofs of his hatred. But before describing them, we believe it our duty to recall certain regulations made by Empress Catherine for the good of the hordes during the period when the establishment of peace seemed possible there and even close at hand.

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On August 13, 1786, on the occasion of a demand for a concession of land made by Khudai Mendy, sultan of the Middle Horde, the border authorities were commanded not only to yield it to him as well as to his subjects, but also to give assistance in money as a pure gift to every family which wished to settle.

On July 15, 1788 it was permitted to give land to Kazaks who went into Russia without requiring any confirmation for this.

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On February 28, 1789 the staff of the Kazak schools on the Orenburg line were confirmed and the salaries of the teachers and the expense of feeding the students at the cost of the government were settled. It was further commanded that their fathers be given, as encouragement, certificates of praise, gifts, etc.

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On April 30, 1789 Baron Igelstrom received an order to compose a plan for a constitution for the Kazaks based on folk customs, habits, and oral laws.

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Although Russia had already recognized the absolute necessity of re-establishing the position of khan in the Middle Horde, the khan had not yet been elected when Syrym broke every [284] kind of liaison with the governor of Orenburg and declared himself the foremost enemy of the Russians. Not satisfied with having aroused his compatriots and having attacked the inhabitants on the right bank of the Ural River, he sought help in Bukhara and sent agents into that land to this end in 1790. The Khan's atalyk replied that help would be sent, but after a certain time. Meanwhile he advised Syrym to continue his raids on the Russian border. One of the envoys who had received this reply in Bukhara was later taken prisoner by the Ural Cossacks and personally gave the most positive details about his embassy.

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In the month of March, 1791 Syrym, hoping to induce the entire Little Horde to invade Russia, convoked a great national assembly at the mouth of the Emba and had letters distributed everywhere to arouse the nation. This undertaking was not fully

may even place the authority in the hands of an adult son, if he has one, or a brother. Recourse to such action may be taken only rarely, but it is nevertheless a recognized delimitation of paternal powers. The parental authority over the son serves as the model for all authority patterns in Kazakh society, such as those involving the village elder, the clan leader, the beg, and the khan.⁵⁹⁶

In the past the parental authority was limited in another sense; the family was part of a village which camped and pastured its herds in common. The leaders of the village decided when and where to camp, when to change camp, when to break up the winter concentration of herds and families and move to the more dispersed spring and summer pastures.⁶²² A family head disobeyed these decisions at his risk. It was to his interest to follow them, since he gained many things thereby: fellowship, social position, protection from dangers by weight of numbers, assistance in time of need. The village in turn was subordinate to the clan authority if there was one. In case of raids, feuds, or other breaches of the peace, a village leader would appeal to the clan chief for aid. In a dispute between villages, a village elder would appeal to his clan chief for a judgment in his favor. [642]

The village elder was the judge of his community, and decided all cases, usually with the support of the other senior men of the village. Appeals from their decisions were rare, defiance of their decisions even rarer. Behind the judgment of the village leader and the other elders lay the force of social solidarity, the weight of the entire village; defiance meant ejection and flight. Defiance of father by the son had similar consequences. The ultimate authority rested with the khan, if there was one, and if he cared to use his power, for he backed his authority with an army and the right of punishment by death or imprisonment, in addition to the force of his position. [621] [596]

The Kazakh household could include several wives if the position and wealth of the master allowed it. In one community studied, the Adai lineage on Mangyshlak peninsula, half the men had only one wife and half had two. In general, very few families contained more than two wives, although there is in theory no upper limit on the number of wives (exclusive of concubines) that a man can have. The ideal number of wives in princely families was considered to be five or nine—in contrast to the ideal number of wives for Moslems which the Koran gives as four. The family and marriage patterns of the Kazakhs are among the traits which give a pronouncedly non-Islamic coloring to their society. [626] [593] [643]

A youth was given his own tent and appurtenances when he came of age; traditionally he was soon to be married, and in fact a substantial number were married by the time they were 20 years old. Even as late as 1926, 222 out of every 1,000 males were married by that age, and in former years the rate was higher. The tent was not identical with the household unit. A young married couple with children did not [565] [171]

Tarasov, 1897, pp. 5, 11.

Radloff (104), 1893, p. 513; Rudenko et al, 1930, pp. 4-8.

Karata (73), 1910, p. 42.

Kazakh men may take more than one wife for many reasons, perhaps to gain the prestige of numerous wives, or because the first wife has not borne a son. A barren or sonless wife may be divorced and sent back to her family. The fortunate woman who has borne a son is endowed with property which is hers to hold in trust for her minor children. Should the mother of a son be widowed, she is a free agent and may remarry or not, as she pleases and whom she pleases. If a widow has no children or has only daughters, she may be forced into leviratic marriage (i.e., marriage with the brother of her deceased husband). If she has only daughters, her family may be broken up at the death of the husband.

It is in the light of these various changes in rights and statuses that the marriage is seen as pointing to the bearing of sons. There is great joy at the birth of a son, for thereby is the continuation of the line assured, and thereby is the marriage fulfilled.

The leviratic marriage is actually a form of social insurance, for thus does the Kazakh society take care of those families without a male head. The position of the conjugal family within the framework of the extended family is shown by this practice. A woman weds not her husband but her husband's family; when she marries her husband, she potentially marries her husband's brother. The marriage arrangements are made between the families, and the partners involved are not consulted. The line of the family flows not only through the husband but through his brother, and through all the close kin in the male line within the family. In medieval times, the son among both Turks and Mongols also married the widows of the deceased father other than his own mother; but this form of marriage is now taboo.

Within the extended family, and among close kinsmen generally, no one has his exact equal in status. The first basis for differentiation is the generation to which one belongs, the second is the order of birth, the third is chronological age. The age criterion is the least reliable and the least used, but it is there. Kazakh brothers and sisters are ranked according to order of birth, and treat one another with authority or with respect accordingly. Cousins are likewise ranked according to the order of birth of their fathers. The second son of the elder brother does not necessarily take precedence over the elder son of the second brother, however; here complicating factors come in, such as the chronological ages of the cousins in question. If there is a wide disparity in age, then the older cousin takes precedence regardless of birth order. A Kazakh treats his older brother as he does his father's younger brother, and his older sisters as he does his father's younger sisters. He calls them by the same terms and acts toward them in a similar fashion.

Authority and respect tend to follow similar lines outside the family, in the village, clan, and khanate. These latter authority relations are modeled on the paternal, in a way similar to the Chinese, the Japanese, the Roman and South Slavic societies. In considering these parallels,

¹Bichurin, 1950, p. 230.

²Grodek, 1889, p. 29.

³Imanov, 1897, p. 11.

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171 one should remember that the paternal authority of the Chinese, the Japanese, or the Romans is a model for the imperial authority only by analogy, as a manner of speaking. The Confucian admonition to regard the emperor as a father is not taken literally. The Chinese imperial authority pattern is derived from other sources than the paternal role; so is the Kazakh. But Kazakh society as a whole is more steeped in the kinship relation, and hence authority in general is modeled on the paternal to a greater degree than in the other patrilineal societies mentioned.

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Age is the underlying basis of authority in the Kazakh social system, since the old men are the fathers. Paradoxically, traditional Kazakh literature, both oral and written, deals mostly with young heroes. These youths are praised for their daring, strength, cleverness; they defy enemies both human and supernatural. But the hero is typically a younger prince who gains a kingdom in defiance of the law of primogeniture by subduing or outwitting his older brother; the young prince never defies the older generation. The father and elders generally support the elder brother, but they do not actively suppress the younger. In contrast, Kazakh literature of the Soviet era depicts youth defying or combatting his elders.

KAZAKH SOCIETY AND THE PARTY LINE

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Throughout the history of western society, the social classes have been distinguished by differences in birth; the nobility carefully separated themselves from the taint of common blood in medieval Europe, in Renaissance societies, and in modern times. The Kazakh society—the Mongol or Uzbek for that matter—is anomalous because it maintains class distinctions of aristocrat and commoner while affirming a general relatedness through descent from a single ancestor. There are even fictional genealogies which unite all steppe nomads.

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These relatively simple anomalies have caused a dilemma in Soviet publications on the nature of Kazakh society. There is social differentiation not only by birth and descent, but also by wealth. In Kazakh society, the two bases of social inequality were more or less coordinate until the victory of Sovietization. The clan leader was superior to his fellow clansmen by right of birth; the village leader was superior to his fellow villagers by right of birth; both were also richer than the other clansmen or villagers. By right of precedence they allocated the best pasture lands to themselves and decided all judicial questions in their own favor. Both wealth and social influence were based on the number of kinsmen

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who would support a man at a council, or before the law, or in a fight, a feud, or a war. A man of eminent birth and of wealth could get more kinsmen to support him than could a Kazakh with neither. This might seem anomalous, since theoretically a Kazakh is related to all other Kazakhs, and kinsmen help each other. But kinsmen help closer kinsmen before they help distant kin; and kinsmen help superior, influential kinsmen before they help inferior kinsmen who are lacking in influence.

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161 taking techniques were applied. In a more general way, we may derive a rate of net increase of 100 percent per century, which is not unthinkable; nevertheless it must be noted that there is a vast disparity between the accuracy of the 19th century figures prior to the 1897 census, and those of the 1897 and 1926 censuses.

619 The Kazakhs have been divided into three hordes or
175 chief administrative-political units which have been in-
642 dependent of each other since the beginning of the 18th century; these are known as the Great Horde, the Middle Horde and the Little Horde. At the beginning of the 19th century, after the flight of the Kalmyks from the Volga steppes to western China, the territory left free to the east of the Volga was given into the hands of Khan Bukel of the Little Horde. In making this move, under the protection of the Russian government, Khan Bukel formed the Bukel or Inner horde. Thus, during the 19th century there were effectively four hordes of the Kazakhs. The move by Bukel took place during the years 1801-1802,⁴² and his followers numbered about 7000 tents. There is evidence of considerable movement in the western steppes in this period, since it is also reported that shortly before some 3200 tents or families of the Kazakhs had submitted to the Russians by crossing the Irtysh and settling there.⁴³ Again, many of these who had followed

⁴²Levchine, 299-300.

⁴³Kostenko, 30.

[Great Horde]
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171 hundreds (cf. chapter on Kalmuks).¹ However, in the case of the Kazakhs the concept Hundred has been extrapolated from its context as an administrative unit of the politico-military organization and has become a generalized term signifying a major social unit.

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642 Of the social structures in the Great Horde of the Kazakhs, only the clan and its composite units will be considered in the following; divisions of Kazakh society greater than the clan must be left aside. All of Kazakh society is bound together by a genealogical bond, and a system of united lines of real or assumed common descent. All Kazakhs have therefore an actual or fictive kinship with each other, in the paternal line. But while the hordes were composed by means of these structural principles, they also had a state structure of sorts, with rulers, courts, taxes, levies of troops, certain quasi-permanent coercive organizations, and so forth, even maintaining international relations. The Kazakh state structure, in a manner comparable to that of the Kalmuk or of a Khalkha Mongol principality, had features which magnified in size, but did not change in kind, patrilineal-agnatic features of the clan, the lineage, and the extended family. Other features of the Kazakh state, on the contrary, had little to do with consanguinity but were quite comparable to the foundations of any state, whether Oriental or western.

¹[cf. cat. 116, AH1 Mongolia, pp. 208ff. -- Analyst]

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[Great Horde]

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642 The structures larger than the clan must be set aside as of a different order than the smaller units.

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178 The clan, too, can only be touched on briefly, because it faces two ways from a structural point of view. It is of moment to analyze it, albeit summarily, because it throws light on certain general features of consanguinity and affinity in the steppe society. But it was at the same time a social unit of a different order than the lineage, the village, or the family. By the 19th century, especially the latter part, it was moribund; it was rooted in the past, and was in a real sense the anvil upon which the structure of the state [565] was hammered. It was in fact a state in minuscule, with [567] a ruling stratum, the nobles, and subordinate strata, [595] the commoners and slaves. There was a religious cleavage in slave-making; within Islam, the Kazakhs were Sunnite in belief; they took slaves among the Shiite Moslems, Lamaist Kalmuks, and Christians. 69

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182 Certain structural principles which the clan shares with other Kazakh descent groups have been discussed above; among them are its corporate character, the

⁶⁹ Levchine, 330. While their religion was dominantly Islamic, specifically Sunnite, there were also important elements of Manichaeism and of shamanism among them. The latter doctrinary forces, however, corresponded to no pattern in their loyalties or enslavements. In general, Islam was a late and superficial feature of Kazakh religion and culture.